

for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Andrea Pierce is a 8th grader at Drake Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Andrea Pierce is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Andrea Pierce for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING LOCAL SCHOOL'S ROBOTICS TEAMS

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize three local schools that have excelled in robotic competitions. These three teams participated in the Robotics for Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST), regional tournament in Richmond on April 8–9, where 64 teams competed.

The local schools represented—Highland High School in Warrenton, RoboHawk-Team 3373; Fresta Valley Christian School in Marshall, Team 1731; and Battlefield High School in Haymarket, Team 1885 ILITE squad—are all local schools and teams that participated in the regional tournament.

The FIRST robotics program offers students a chance to design a robot from scratch. Their mission is to “inspire young people to be science and technology leaders, by engaging them in exciting mentor-based programs that build science, engineering and technology skills, that inspire innovation, and that foster well-rounded life capabilities including self-confidence, communication, and leadership.” The students receive a box of parts with no instructions, just a specific goal that their robot must reach. Then, the students have to design the robot to complete certain tasks for the competitions. The students are allotted a six-week period to build their robots and must bag and tag them before the tournament.

The students are responsible for obtaining mentors and sponsors to raise the \$5,000 that is needed to receive a starter kit from FIRST. Their mentors are usually parents who work in the field of engineering and are role models and an inspiration to the students.

At the regional tournament in Richmond, there were three different competition rounds. The first round was autonomous, where the pre-programmed six-wheel robot had to act independently of its operators and place rings on pegs in order to gain points. The second round consisted of the operators having the robot place tubes on the scoring racks. The final and most difficult round, according to the Battlefield team, was having a minibot climb up the rack and place tubes at a faster and higher rate than the original robot.

I congratulate all the teams for participating in such a hands-on engineering and scientific

educational experience, with special mention to the Fresta Valley Christian School for making it to the quarterfinals of the competition. I also congratulate Battlefield High School for placing second in the regional tournament. I congratulate and commend the two teams for their participation in the National Championship, which was held in St. Louis April 27–30.

AARON CISNEROS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Aaron Cisneros for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Aaron Cisneros is a 10th grader at Jefferson Senior High and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Aaron Cisneros is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Aaron Cisneros for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all his future accomplishments.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today our national debt is \$14,325,784,545,788.31.

On January 6, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

This means the national debt has increased by \$3,687,358,799,494.50 since then.

This debt and its interest payments we are passing to our children and all future Americans.

ALMA FRANCO-TORRES

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Alma Franco-Torres for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Alma Franco-Torres is a 8th grader at Drake Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Alma Franco-Torres is exemplary of the type of achieve-

ment that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Alma Franco-Torres for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future accomplishments.

63RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF ISRAEL

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, today, Israel celebrates 63 years of independence as a Jewish-state. I am proud to say that it was on this same day 63 years ago that the United States became the first country in the world to recognize the State of Israel. For decades, our two nations have shared an unyielding bond based on trust, common values and a great respect for one another. I look forward to celebrating this bond for years to come.

As the Middle East and North Africa continue on their paths to self-governance it is my sincere hope that this progress will continue in the most peaceful way possible. I believe that once the people of these growing nations are able to achieve their ambitions that the bonds between Israel, the United States and the region will prosper. The United States will continue our efforts with Israel and others in the region to achieve widespread peace and work together toward this end.

I offer my best wishes to President Peres, Prime Minister Netanyahu, and the people of Israel as they celebrate their 63rd Independence Day. I remain committed to ensuring that the next 63 years of U.S.-Israel relations are marked by cooperation and mutual respect.

ASHLEIGH SANTISTEVAN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Ashleigh Santistevan for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Ashleigh Santistevan is a 12th grader at Warren Tech North and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Ashleigh Santistevan is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Ashleigh Santistevan for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future accomplishments.

HONORING KALERVO RUUSKANEN
OF CANTERBURY, CONNECTICUT
FOR 50 YEARS OF DEDICATED
SERVICE IN THE CANTERBURY
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Kalervo "Kavi" Ruuskanen of Canterbury, Connecticut in recognition of his 50 years of dedicated service with the Canterbury Volunteer Fire Department.

In 1960, a young Kalervo Ruuskanen helped friends and neighbors extinguish a brush fire. He impressed the local emergency officials so much that they asked him to join the department. Now 50 years later, Mr. Ruuskanen is the first non-charter member of the Canterbury Volunteer Fire Department to have reached the 50-year milestone. This accomplishment is a testament both to his skill as a first responder and his commitment to serving his fellow man.

Not only has he been with the Canterbury Volunteer Fire Department for 50 years, he has also worked as an emergency medical technician, and currently serves as a Constable of Canterbury and volunteers as a fire policeman. In small towns across eastern Connecticut where we rely on volunteers to protect our homes, our businesses and our way of life, men and women like Kalervo Ruuskanen provide a vital service by ensuring our safety.

As the duly elected Representative of the Second Congressional District of Connecticut, I ask that my colleagues in the House of Representatives join me in extending hearty congratulations and warm thanks to Mr. Ruuskanen for his dedication and selfless service to the people of Canterbury, Connecticut.

IMPORTANCE OF INFORMATION
AND REFERRAL PROGRAMS

HON. LEE TERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the dedicated professionals working each day in the field of Information and Referral or I&R. These people perform the essential task of bringing people and services together, assistance that has proven to be more important than ever in these difficult economic times.

In particular, I wish to acknowledge the important work of the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems or AIRS which has been serving for more than 30 years as the national organization which developed the professional standards that are a part of thousands of quality Information and Referral programs in this Nation.

In 2010, Information and Referral professionals responded to more than 20 million calls across our Nation from people seeking assistance. This includes people that accessed services through the hundreds of 2-1-1 organizations. AIRS in partnership with

United Way Worldwide were the architects of the 2-1-1 system which has served to transform access to human services in America and Canada.

The United States is currently served by Information and Referral professionals through 2-1-1 programs, aging I&R services, Aging and Disability Resource Centers, child care resource and referral services, military family centers, and other specialty Information and Referral services. In addition, the Aging Network consists of 56 State agencies on aging, 629 area agencies on aging, 244 Tribal organizations, and 2 Native Hawaiian organizations. These entities also provide Information and Referral and are important to moving Information and Referral forward.

The importance of the Information and Referral service is that it links consumers with the most appropriate service that they may need whether it be for housing, nutrition, job training, transportation services or long-term care options counseling. Information and Referral and 2-1-1s have proven to be especially invaluable in times of natural disasters in our Nation working in conjunction with first responders to provide help to persons in need.

Information and Referral services have been recognized in Federal legislation for more than 35 years, including in the 1973 reauthorization of the Older Americans Act and including the establishment of the National Eldercare Locator and the development of Aging and Disability Resource Centers.

Comprehensive and specialized Information and Referral programs help people in every community and operate as a critical component of the health and human services delivery system. Information and Referral organizations have databases of programs and services, and disseminate information through a variety of channels to individuals, professionals and communities.

Let me conclude by commending all those professionals who work in the Information and Referral field and with 2-1-1s. We are especially fortunate in my District and State to have one of the most effective of these professionals, my friend Jamie Moore who serves as Vice President of Volunteer & Community Services at the United Way of the Midlands.

I urge my colleagues to become more familiar with the Information and Referral and 2-1-1 programs in their districts help their constituents learn about who to call for information about local resources.

ALEXANDRA BURTON

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Alexandra Burton for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Alexandra Burton is a 12th grader at Warren Tech North and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Alexandra Burton is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their edu-

cation and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Alexandra Burton for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future accomplishments.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO GROUND ZERO FOLLOWING THE KILLING OF OSAMA BIN LADEN

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my fellow New Yorkers in expressing my gratitude to President Obama for visiting our city today and for a job very well done. Under the President's extraordinary leadership and with an heroic effort by our military and our intelligence community, at long last, a mass murderer has been brought to justice.

President Obama's visit to Ground Zero will hopefully bring comfort to the families who lost loved ones, and bring the attention of the world back to the courage that so many showed on 9/11: the firefighters, police officers, and first responders who answered the call of duty and went into burning towers, never to return; the construction workers and volunteers who came to Ground Zero to help our nation recover; the office workers who risked their lives to lead others to safety.

I hope the President's visit will also remind Americans how we came together after the attacks, a unity that impressed itself on the heart of the world and delivered us from some of the most difficult times our nation has ever faced. As the President himself said, when we come together, there's nothing that we can't do.

HONORING MURIEL SCOTT

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Muriel Scott, the President and CEO of the Central Maine Area Agency on Aging, better known as Spectrum Generations. For more than three decades, Muriel has been dedicated to building a strong agency to serve central Maine's elderly population.

Muriel has always believed in the importance of seniors' exercising their own independence. For decades, Muriel has worked to support policies and initiatives that make it easier for seniors to live in their own homes and lead their own lives.

Muriel's hard work and dedication expanded Spectrum Generations to seven community center locations in central Maine. She first joined Spectrum in 1976 as the Director for the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, and Muriel would serve as Nutrition Director before rising to the position of Associate Director in 1979.

Under Muriel's leadership, Spectrum became a leader in ensuring community access